

In the Claims:

Please cancel claim 55. The claims are as follows:

1. (Original) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract dataset by a decentralized execution system (DES) from a procurement contract management system (PCMS); and

passing the contract dataset through a software filter that determines whether to store the contract dataset or a first portion thereof in a relational database of the DES, said relational database including contract datasets, vendor datasets, and purchase item datasets.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the software filter further determines whether to store the contract dataset or a second portion thereof in a special database of the DES.

3. (Original) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract dataset by a first SAP contract management system from a second SAP contract management system; and

passing the contract dataset through a software filter that determines whether to store the contract dataset or a first portion thereof in a SAP database of the first SAP contract management system.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the software filter further determines whether to

store the contract dataset or a second portion thereof in a non-SAP database of the first SAP contract management system.

5. (Original) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract datagroup D_G by a decentralized execution system (DES) from a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said contract datagroup D_G selected from the group consisting of a contract dataset and a contract deltadataset, said contract datagroup D_G identifying N purchase items purchasable from a vendor V keyed to the contract datagroup D_G , said N at least 1, said contract datagroup D_G identifying the vendor V if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having purchase items;

determining which, if any, of the N purchase items identified in the contract datagroup D_G match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and determining a total number K of such purchase items in D_G that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said K satisfying $0 \leq K \leq N$; and if $K < N$ then

if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset then determining whether the vendor V matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor V so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then adding a subset of D_G to the relational database, said subset of D_G excluding the K purchase items from D_G , else

if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset and D_G is keyed to a first contract dataset in the relational database then adding to the first contract dataset in the relational database a remaining $N-K$ purchase items of D_G .

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the DES further comprises a special database that includes contract datasets, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset, and wherein if $K > 0$ then said method further comprising:

if D_G is keyed to a first contract dataset in the special database, then adding to the first contract dataset in the special database the K purchase items of D_G ; and

if D_G is not keyed to any contract dataset in the special database, then forming from D_G a contract dataset D_{C1} that includes the K purchase items and excludes the remaining $N-K$ purchase items, and adding D_{C1} to the special database.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein if $K < N$ and the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset and the vendor V does not match a vendor in the vendor datasets, then further comprising adding a vendor dataset D_V to the relational database when a contract based on the subset of D_G is required at the DES, said vendor dataset D_V keyed to the vendor V .

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein adding D_V to the relational database comprises extracting D_V from a vendor database prior to adding D_V to the relational database.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein adding D_V to the relational database comprises:

communicating a message to a DES buyer keyed to at least one purchase item of the remaining $N-K$ purchase items, each of said at least one purchase item matching a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said message relating to adding D_V to the relational database; and

having the DES buyer cause D_V to be added to the relational database when the contract

based on the subset of D_G is required at the DES.

10. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset.

11. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset.

12. (Original) The method of claim 5, said PCMS being a SAP system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database.

13. (Original) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract dataset D_C by a decentralized execution system (DES) from a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said contract dataset D_C identifying a vendor V and N purchase items purchasable from the vendor V , said N at least 1, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having purchase items, said DES further comprising a special database that includes contract datasets;

determining which, if any, of the N purchase items identified in the contract dataset D_C match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and determining a total number K of such purchase items in D_C that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said K satisfying $0 \leq K \leq N$; and

if $K = N$ then adding D_C to the special database, else if $K < N$ then determining whether

the vendor V matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor V so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then adding a first subset of D_C to the relational database and if $K > 0$ adding a second subset of D_C to the contract datasets of the special database, said first subset of D_C excluding the K purchase items from D_C , said second subset of D_C excluding a remaining N-K purchase items from D_C .

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

adding a new purchase item to the purchase item datasets;

determining whether the new purchase item is identified in a contract dataset D_{CS} of the special database; and

if the new purchase item is so identified in D_{CS} and D_{CS} identifies J purchase items such that J is at least 1, then determining whether a vendor identified in D_{CS} matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor identified in D_{CS} so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then:

if a contract identifier of D_{CS} matches a contract identifier of a first contract dataset in the relational database then adding the new purchase item to the first contract dataset, else

if the contract identifier of D_{CS} does not matches a contract identifier of any contract dataset in the relational database then adding a subset of D_{CS} to the relational database, said subset of D_{CS} including the new purchase item; and

if $J = 1$ then deleting D_{CS} from the special database else deleting the new purchase item from D_{CS} .

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising extracting the new purchase item from a purchase item database prior to adding the new purchase item to the purchase item datasets.

16. (Original) The method of claim 13, said PCMS being a SAP system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database, said special database being a non-SAP database.

17. (Original) A method for updating an execution document relating to a contract, said method comprising:

having an execution document at a decentralized execution system (DES) of a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said execution document being derived from a contract dataset in the DES, said execution document having an existing attribute value for a purchase item in the contract dataset;

receiving notice at the DES from the PCMS of a new attribute value that is to replace the existing attribute value; and

replacing the existing attribute value with the new attribute value in the execution document.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, said existing attribute value for the purchase item being a first price of the purchase item, said new attribute value for the purchase item being a second price of the purchase item.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17, said execution document being a purchase order.

20. (Original) The method of claim 17, said execution document being a scheduling agreement whose new attribute value for the purchase item is effective upon receipt of the purchase item by a DES buyer keyed to the purchase item.

21. (Original) The method of claim 17, said PCMS and said DES each being a SAP system.

22. (Original) A method of contract archiving, comprising:

 sending a list of I identifiers by a procurement contract management system (PCMS) to at least one decentralized execution system (DES), said I at least 1, each identifier of the I identifiers identifying a contract dataset in the PCMS earmarked by the PCMS for archiving;

 receiving by the PCMS a return list of M of the I identifiers from each DES of the at least one DES in response to said sending, said M in a range of $0 \leq M \leq I$, said return list being DES-specific, each said contract dataset identified in the return list of each DES having been approved by said each DES for archiving; and

 archiving by the PCMS each contract dataset identified in the list of I identifiers and appearing in an intersection list of the return lists, if the intersection list is not empty.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising communicating by the PCMS to each DES of the at least one DES:

 that the archiving was done by the PCMS for the contract datasets appearing in the

intersect list, if the intersection list is not empty; or

that the archiving will not be done, if the intersection list is empty.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, said PCMS and each of the at least one DES being a SAP system.

25. (Original) A method of contract archiving, comprising:

receiving by a first decentralized execution system (DES) of at least one DES from a procurement contract management system (PCMS) a list of I identifiers, said I at least 1, each identifier of the I identifiers identifying a contract dataset in the PCMS earmarked by the PCMS for archiving, said list of I identifiers sent by the PCMS to each DES of the at least one DES, said PCMS adapted to receive a return list of M of the I identifiers from each DES of the at least one DES in response to said sending, said M in a range of $0 \leq M \leq I$, said return list being DES-specific, each said contract dataset identified in the return list of each DES having been approved by said each DES for archiving, said PCMS adapted to archive each contract dataset identified in the suggest list and appearing in an intersection list of the return lists if the intersection list is not empty; and

sending by the first DES to the PCMS the return list of the first DES.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising receiving by the first DES notification from the PCMS:

that the archiving was done by the PCMS for the contract datasets appearing in the

intersect list, if the intersection list is not empty; or

that the archiving will not be done, if the intersection list is empty.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25, said PCMS and each of the at least one DES being a SAP system.

28. (Original) A system for managing contract data, comprising software at a decentralized execution system (DES), said software adapted to:

receive a contract dataset by the DES from a procurement contract management system (PCMS); and

pass the contract dataset through a software filter that is adapted to determine whether to store the contract dataset or a first portion thereof in a relational database of the DES, said relational database adapted to include contract datasets, vendor datasets, and purchase item datasets.

29. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 28, wherein the software filter is adapted to further determine whether to store the contract dataset or a second portion thereof in a special database of the DES.

30. (Original) A system for managing contract data, comprising software at a decentralized execution system (DES), said software adapted to:

receive a contract dataset by a first SAP contract management system from a second SAP

contract management system; and

pass the contract dataset through a software filter that determines whether to store the contract dataset or a first portion thereof in a SAP database of the DES.

31. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 30, wherein the software filter is adapted to further determine whether to store the contract dataset or a second portion thereof in a non-SAP database of the first SAP contract management system.

32. (Original) A system for managing contract data, comprising software at a decentralized execution system (DES), said software adapted:

to have the DES receive a contract datagroup D_G from a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said contract datagroup D_G selected from the group consisting of a contract dataset and a contract deltadataset, said contract datagroup D_G identifying N purchase items purchasable from a vendor V keyed to the contract datagroup D_G , said N at least 1, said contract datagroup D_G identifying the vendor V if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having purchase items;

to determine which, if any, of the N purchase items identified in the contract datagroup D_G match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and to determine a total number K of such purchase items in the D_G that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said K satisfying $0 \leq K \leq N$; and if $K < N$ then

if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset then to determine whether the vendor

V matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor V so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then to add a subset of D_G to the relational database, said subset of D_G excluding the K purchase items from D_G , else

if the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset and said contract deltadataset is keyed to a first dataset in the relational database then to add to the first dataset a remaining N-K purchase items of the contract datagroup D_G .

33. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 32, wherein the DES further comprises a special database that includes contract datasets, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset, and wherein if $K > 0$ then said software is further adapted:

if D_G is keyed to a first contract dataset in the special database, then to add to the first contract dataset in the special database the K purchase items of D_G ; and

if D_G is not keyed to any contract dataset in the special database, then to form from D_G a contract dataset D_{C1} that includes the K purchase items and excludes the remaining N-K purchase items, and to add D_{C1} to the special database.

34. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 32, wherein if $K < N$ and the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset and the vendor V does not match a vendor in the vendor datasets, then said software is further adapted to have a vendor dataset D_V added to the relational database when a contract based on the subset of D_G is required at the DES, said vendor dataset D_V keyed to the vendor V.

35. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 34, wherein said software is further adapted to have the vendor dataset D_v extracted from a vendor database prior to having D_v added to the relational database.

36. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 34, wherein to have the vendor dataset D_v added to the relational database comprises:

to communicate a message to a DES buyer keyed to at least one purchase item of the remaining N-K purchase items, each of said at least one purchase item matching a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said message relating to adding D_v to the relational database; and

to have the DES buyer cause D_v to be added to the relational database when the contract based on the subset of D_G is required at the DES.

37. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 32, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract dataset.

38. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 32, wherein the contract datagroup D_G is the contract deltadataset.

39. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 32, said PCMS being a SAP system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database, said software being non-SAP software.

40. (Original) A system for managing contract data, comprising software at a decentralized execution system (DES), said software adapted:

to have the DES receive a contract dataset D_C from a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said contract dataset D_C identifying a vendor V and M purchase items purchasable from the vendor V , said M at least 1, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having purchase items, said DES further comprising a special database that includes contract datasets;

to determine which, if any, of the N purchase items identified in the contract dataset D_C match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and to determine a total number K of such purchase items in the D_C that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said K satisfying $0 \leq K \leq N$; and

if $K = N$ then to add D_C to the special database, else if $K < N$ then to determine whether the vendor V matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor V so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then to add a first subset of D_C to the relational database and if $K > 0$ to add a second subset of D_C to the contract datasets of the special database, said first subset of D_C excluding the K purchase items from D_C , said second subset of D_C excluding a remaining $N-K$ purchase items from D_C .

41. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 40, wherein said software is further adapted:

to add a new purchase item to the purchase item datasets;

to determine whether the new purchase item is identified in a contract dataset D_{CS} of the

special database; and

if the new purchase item is so identified in D_{CS} and D_{CS} identifies J purchase items such that J is at least 1, then to determine whether a vendor identified in D_{CS} matches a vendor in the vendor datasets, and if the vendor identified in D_{CS} so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then:

if a contract identifier of D_{CS} matches a contract identifier of a first contract dataset in the relational database then to add the new purchase item to the first contract dataset, else

if the contract identifier of D_{CS} does not matches a contract identifier of any contract dataset in the relational database then to add a subset of D_{CS} to the relational database, said subset of D_{CS} including the new purchase item; and

if $J = 1$ then to delete D_{CS} from the special database else to delete the new purchase item from D_{CS} .

42. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 41, wherein said software is further adapted to extract the new purchase item from a purchase item database prior to adding the new purchase item to the purchase item datasets.

43. (Original) The system for managing contract data of claim 40, said PCMS being a SAP system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database, said special database being a non-SAP database, said software being non-SAP software.

44. (Original) A system for updating an execution document relating to a contract, comprising a decentralized execution system (DES) of a procurement contract management system (PCMS), said DES having software adapted:

to have an execution document at the DES, said execution document being derived from a contract dataset in the DES, said execution document having an existing attribute value for a purchase item in the contract dataset;

to receive notice at the DES from the PCMS of a new attribute value that is to replace the existing attribute value; and

to replace the existing attribute value with the new attribute value in the execution document.

45. (Original) The system for updating an execution document of claim 44, said existing attribute value for the purchase item being a first price of the purchase item, said new attribute value for the purchase item being a second price of the purchase item.

46. (Original) The system for updating an execution document of claim 44, said execution document being a purchase order.

47. (Original) The system for updating an execution document of claim 44, said execution document being a scheduling agreement whose new attribute value for the purchase item is effective upon receipt of the purchase item by a DES buyer keyed to the purchase item.

48. (Original) The system for updating an execution document of claim 44, said PCMS and said DES each being a SAP system, said software being non-SAP software.

49. (Original) A system for contract archiving, comprising a procurement contract management system (PCMS) having software adapted:

to send a list of I identifiers to at least one decentralized execution system (DES), said I at least 1, each identifier of the I identifiers identifying a contract dataset in the PCMS earmarked by the PCMS for archiving;

to receive a return list of M of the I identifiers from each DES of the at least one DES in response to having sent the list of I identifiers to each said DES, said M in a range of $0 \leq M \leq I$, said return list being DES-specific, each said contract dataset identified in the return list of each DES having been approved by said each DES for archiving; and

to archive each contract dataset identified in the list of I identifiers and appearing in an intersection list of the return lists, if the intersection list is not empty.

50. (Original) The system for contract archiving of claim 49, said software further adapted to communicate to each DES of the at least one DES:

that the archiving was done by the PCMS for the contract datasets appearing in the intersect list, if the intersection list is not empty; or

that the archiving will not be done, if the intersection list is empty.

51. (Original) The system for contract archiving of claim 49, said PCMS and each of the at least

one DES being a SAP system, said software being non-SAP software.

52. (Original) A system for contract archiving, comprising a first decentralized execution system (DES) of at least one DES, said first DES having software adapted:

to receive from a procurement contract management system (PCMS) a list of I identifiers, said I at least 1, each identifier of the I identifiers adapted to identify a contract dataset in the PCMS earmarked by the PCMS for archiving, said list of I identifiers adapted to be sent by the PCMS to each DES of the at least one DES, said PCMS adapted to receive a return list of M of the I identifiers from each DES of the at least one DES in response to having sent the list of I identifiers to each said DES, said M in a range of $0 \leq M \leq I$, said return list being DES-specific, each said contract dataset identified in the return list of each DES having been approved by each said DES for archiving, said PCMS adapted to archive each contract dataset identified in the list of I identifiers and appearing in an intersection list of the return lists if the intersection list is not empty; and

to send to the PCMS the return list of the first DES.

53. (Original) The system for contract archiving of claim 52, said software further adapted to receive notification from the PCMS:

that the archiving was done by the PCMS for the contract datasets appearing in the intersect list, if the intersection list is not empty; or

that the archiving will not be done, if the intersection list is empty.

54. (Original) The system for contract archiving of claim 52, said PCMS and each of the at least one DES being a SAP system, said software being non-SAP software.

55. (Canceled)